

Sister of the Year by **demogorgonneedsasnickers**

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Gen

Language: English

Characters: Eleven (Stranger Things), Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Ted Wheeler

Relationships: Mike Wheeler & Nancy Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-02-16

Updated: 2018-02-16

Packaged: 2022-04-21 15:07:27

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,536

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Where Nancy realizes just how badly Mike has been struggling with El's disappearance, so she acts like a sister should and comforts him in his basement fort.

Sister of the Year

Author's Note:

This was one of my first of many Stranger Things fics I ever wrote, so I hope you like it! I think it will be a series of little fics I've written, all in different characters perspectives.

Some will take place in between seasons, during season 1 or 2, or after. This one is in Nancy's POV during 100th day anniversary that El went missing.

Nancy Wheeler was a good sister, she thought. She had her days, or even her weeks, and perhaps *months* where she wavered in her sister duties – but all in all she was always a pretty good sister. Yeah, she didn't win sister of the year, but she and Mike laughed and had fun. She would put up with his dumb rants about Dungeons and Dragons or whatever, he would give in and do stuff for her. Whether it was her chores, or let her pick out his outfits for him, it didn't matter; she and Mike had a good relationship.

That was until Steve Harrington came into the picture.

It was never Steve's fault, just hers. In order to impress him, she changed parts of herself – one of those being a good sister. She knew it was wrong, but Mike was *so annoying*. He was at such a weird age, all he ever wanted to do was talk about arcade games and D&D and nerd stuff, all Nancy wanted to do was talk about boys and school. So, needless to say, they grew apart.

Nancy knew, deep down, she did the same thing with Barb. She tried not to let herself think that way, but it was true. Barb and Mike weren't *cool*, and Steve Harrington was. So, she pushed away the people who mattered most to her to be just that. *Cool*.

But when Barb went missing, that all changed.

Once Nancy realized what had happened to Barb was more than what the police wanted her to think, she realized Barb *never* would have

been out there, alone, if it weren't for her. *She* pushed Barb away, *she* left Barb to fend for herself; and for what?

When this realization hit her, Nancy also realized there was another person in her life that she had treated like shit: her brother. Sure, he was weird and awkward and *rude*, but he was her brother. She loved him to the ends of the earth, something she recognized in Jonathan himself for his own brother. They would do *anything* for them, even if he was a nuisance and tried to prank her three times a week. No matter what, Mike was always still on Nancy's side. They understood each other. Even when she saw Steve sneak into her room, he never ratted her out. After all, with their dad's lack of love and concern, and their mother's suffocating yet frazzled tendencies (as she basically raised three kids on her own), she and Mike had to stick together.

However, all of this hit her only after she had no clue where on earth her brother was. When she finally saw him, standing outside the Byers house squinting at her like she was insane, all she could do was hug the kid. As she hugged him, all she could think about was how she *refused* to push away her brother, like she pushed away Barb. She *would not* lose him too. She couldn't. She even put more focus on her brother in those few hours they had together that night, seeing the annoying little pest she had as a brother had a *crush* on a girl with *super powers*, and had done everything in *his* power to protect her. Nancy Wheeler would never tell Mike this aloud, but she was proud of him. In a blink of an eye, he wasn't her annoying 12-year-old brother anymore, but her pre-teen brother who wasn't afraid to give up his life for the people he loved.

Then, everything ended. The Demogorgon's were gone, the Upside Down was being contained, Barb was still dead, Eleven was missing, and her life started to go back to how it was. She grieved just as Mike grieved. They had both lost their friends, never getting real closure on their deaths. But as Nancy started to heal, she assumed Mike would start to heal with her. Only, he didn't. He just got worse.

At first, she didn't think anything of it. Mike had always had attitude (honestly his sass was something she always secretly admired from the kid) and Nancy was too busy pushing away her grief to notice. But as time went on, Nancy felt Mike pull away farther and farther

from the family, and from her.

Her parents didn't help, either.

Mike started acting out in school, starting fights, sassing off to the teachers. He seemed to have detention nearly every week, and their parents never once handled it with care. The more rules and punishments they harped on Mike, the more he acted out. She felt bad for him, but the only thing Nancy could make herself do was hope this was a stage. He was a teenager now, puberty was hitting him hard, and he had just watched a friend *die* right in front of his eyes. Lord knew what else Mike saw, he would never talk about it. This was to be expected, right? Only, her parents seemed to think otherwise. The night her dad threatened boarding school was an ear full. From what she overheard from her room, her uncaring dad told him he would send him off if he didn't straighten up, and Mike rolled his eyes. She didn't blame him, she probably would have too, but it didn't settle well with either her parents, nonetheless.

Mike was sent to his room, and her parents whispered down in the living room. Nancy sneaked to the top of the steps, listening as they spoke to each other.

"He just skipped school, Karen." Her dad scolded. "All kids play hooky every now and then."

She could hear her mother scoff. "You just threaten to send our son away, and *that's* what you have to say?"

"He's a kid. He'll get over it."

Her mom was silent, most likely holding her tongue. "We need to figure out what to do with this behavior."

"It'll pass, Karen. He's a teenager, they all go through this."

"No, Ted, they don't all go through this!" She sighed. Nancy could almost hear the tears in her eyes. "Not our Mike. This *isn't* our Mike. Something's wrong and instead of him opening up he's pushing us away."

"I'm sure all his other friends are doing the same thing. They all

probably played hooky together.”

“Really? Because I called Joyce and she said Will has been fine, under the circumstances. Called Dustin’s mom. Dustin’s been odd, but fine. Sinclair’s? Lucas has had *one* week where he was yelling and snapping, but other than that, he’s been rather normal. They’re all struggling, but *none* of them are taking all of this as hard as Mike. We as parents need to find out *why*.”

She heard her father groan. “You’re overreacting, Karen.”

Nancy stood up at that. Her mother’s words brought a light bulb over Nancy’s head, the sudden realization hitting her. Everyone dealt with their grief differently, that was clear, but Mike was struggling more than all of them ... because he *liked* Eleven.

Nancy walked to Mike’s room.

“Mike?” She whispered through the door, giving a soft knock after she spoke. No reply. Her brow furrowed and she twisted the knob, walking in to see an empty room. The window was left open though. For a hot minute Nancy thought he’d run away, but then it dawned on her that they took away Mike’s bike for skipping school. Her mother said it was to make him think about what he’d done. However, Nancy was fairly certain her mom was just terrified of the thought of Mike *alone*, god knows where, just like Will was when he disappeared.

No matter what, Mike wouldn’t try running off without his bike.

Nancy peeked her head further in the room, seeing a rope of some sort hanging out the window. She stuck her head out, seeing the door of the basement right below her. Of course, he went to hide out in his weird nerd layer. Nancy sighed, knowing the rope wouldn’t hold her, but hating to pass her parents as they argued. She considered the rope, then shook her head. Parents were her safest bet.

She slipped down the stairs, snuck past her parents, and crept through the basement door. When her feet hit the steps, Nancy paused, realizing Mike hadn’t noticed her presence. He was ... talking to someone?

"I-I really miss you." She heard him say in such a soft voice – Nancy couldn't remember the last time Mike sounded so gentle and sincere. "We all miss you, I guess. The guys don't stop talking about you." He chuckled. "I think Will's heard all the stories at least a dozen times now."

Nancy peeked forward, seeing he was talking to his walkie-talkie as he sat in his little fort. The same fort Eleven supposedly slept in when he was hiding her for so long, everyone in this house oblivious to it.

"My parents keep fighting, and I keep getting in trouble for *their* problems. I skip school *once* and my dad threatens fucking boarding school..." He sighed, staring down at the walkie like it would talk back. "I just ... I wish you were here, El."

The realization hit her like a brick wall, a gasp almost escaping her throat.

He was talking to *El*.

Nancy Wheeler's heart sank.

"It's now been exactly 100 days since you, ya know, since you left." She saw tears build up in his eyes. "I'm so sorry, El. This is all my fault. I promised to keep you safe, and now ..." He trailed off, wiping tears from his eyes with his sleeves. "The guys don't know I talk to you on here, they all think you're dead, I just ... I can't believe that." He paused, then whispered, "*Please*, just ... let me know you're all right."

Tears were building in her eyes, her breath so unsteady, her stomach twisted in knots. This was her fault. She left Mike at the school, she paid him zero attention when he needed it most, she was supposed to protect him and *failed*. Suddenly, Nancy felt like she and Mike weren't alone. It was a strange feeling, she couldn't quite explain it. It was an eerie presence, like another person had entered, but no one had. It was still just ... them.

Mike stared in front of him for a moment, like something was there (like *someone* was), and he then talked in the walkie again. "I know I tried before, but I tried looking for you today – in the woods. I

skipped school to go scout the forest, but Hopper caught me snooping around.” He cursed under his breath. “Ratted me out. Now my parents have taken my bike for a week.” He rolled his eyes at the thought. “Why the hell was Hopper out in the woods anyway?”

There was no one in front of Mike, yet all Nancy could think was there *was*. Like this presence she couldn’t explain was sitting right in front of him, trying everything to communicate back. She leaned in some more, looking closer, seeing if what she was feeling was real when,

SQUEAK

Nancy winced.

Mike jumped, hiding away the walkie and looking up the squeaking steps with wide eyes. His eyes rolled inside his head and he let out a heavy breath of relief. “Nancy,” He scooted out of the fort. “What do *you* want?”

The way his voice changed so suddenly honestly pierced Nancy a little. He went from caring and sweet to rude and harsh in a matter of seconds. She cleared her throat, realizing her emotions at gotten the better of her, to say, “Nothing. Just wanted to check on you.”

Mike raised a brow at her, his top lip perked up like Elvis, his eyes narrowed. “Since when the hell do you care...” He muttered, sitting on the outside of the fort with the walkie in his hand. He was changing channels back, she assumed by the sound of frequencies ringing out.

“Believe it or not, I *do* actually care about you.” Nancy said, skipping down the stairs. “I *am* your sister, after all.”

Mike scoffed, but made no reply. Nancy then took it upon herself to sit beside her brother, making him scoot over so they could both fit nicely in front of the fort, a smile on her face. “Whatcha doin’?”

Mike looked at her like she was Holly, trying to play with his toys. “Nothing.” He muttered to her. He then blinked. “Mom and dad don’t know I’m down here, right?”

Nancy shook her head. "Nah, just me."

He nodded, then stayed quiet. For a while they just sat there, Mike messing with the channels on the walkie, Nancy watching him intently. She kept waiting for him to speak, but never once did he say anything. He just ... sat there.

Nancy decided she was going to talk, someone had to. "Who were you talking to?"

Mike paused. His fingers stopped twiddling, his eyes wide open. He didn't look at her, he didn't respond, he just froze.

She took it upon herself to keep it on then, getting some kind of reaction out of him. "You really miss her ... don't you?"

Nancy couldn't see his face, due to his long shaggy hair covering it as he hung his head over his lap, but she witnessed tears drip down to the walkie. They splashed, and he wiped them away with his sleeve as he sniffled. Finally, he nodded.

Nancy, without hesitation, put her arm around him and reeled him into her chest. Mike was stiff at first, her outward and unexpected affection causing him to fall shocked at her actions. However, when Nancy gently leaned her head into his shaggy, black hair; her arm rubbing his shoulder; her other arm tightly wrapping around his ribcage; her brother shattered, all his broken pieces melting into her embrace. Her heart ached as her little brother sobbed in her arms, suddenly holding onto her like this was the first hug he had ever been graced with. The way his face buried into her shoulder, the way his fingers clutched her sleeve like if he didn't hold her tight enough, she might just vanish.

The walkie was pushed to the side, crackling and popping like it had been on and off, as Mike Wheeler cried in his sister's arms for the first time since he was a baby.

And the only thing Nancy Wheeler could feel, other than pain and remorse for her brother, was that someone else was there too, comforting him.

And the only thing Nancy Wheeler could think, was if she had been told two 12-year-olds could fall in love, she would have scoffed. Never in a million years could a *kid* understand what love was, could feel it, could struggle with it.

But at this very moment, there was no doubt in her mind that that was *exactly* what her brother was feeling. And what was worse, she knew for a fact Mike was just as clueless as his parents as to *why* he felt this way.

He was just a kid. Kids couldn't fall in love, right?

Now, now all Nancy wanted to do was *scoff* at the thought.

Author's Note:

Hope you liked it!

More to come, hopefully.